



# KAPPA ALPHA PSI FOUNDATION

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January 5, 2010

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Federal Communications Commission  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

Re: GN Docket No. 09-191

Dear Chairman Genachowski and Commissioners:

Kappa Alpha Psi was founded in 1911 on the campus of Indiana University and its fundamental purpose is achievement. Early in our nation's history, African-American students were actively dissuaded from attending college, and even for the few who enrolled, formidable obstacles prevented them from assimilating into campus life. The founders of Kappa Alpha Psi sought to rectify this experience and established the fraternity as an organization that would "raise the sights of black collegians and stimulate them to accomplishments higher than they might have imagined."

As a collegiate organization, we recognize the immense benefits of broadband, particularly in the realm of education. When our founders attended college, course offerings were limited to the physical boundaries of campus. Now, students are able to take classes online, earning college credits and degrees from universities across the country and the globe. Higher-education's commitment to learning and embrace of technology has helped countless students broaden their horizons.

However, while many of our members have been able to experience the benefits of broadband, we recognize that there are many in our community who still lack access to the technology. The Pew Internet & American Life project recently surveyed home broadband adoption rates, and according to the report, "African Americans experienced their second consecutive year of broadband adoption growth that was below average." In 2009, only 46% of African Americans have broadband at home, compared to 43% in 2008 and 40% in 2007. These numbers signify that there is still much work to be done in connecting our minority communities.

The Commission has taken a number of admirable steps in helping to connect our community, particularly in their work on the National Broadband Plan. The Ft. Lauderdale Chapter of Kappa Alpha Psi questions the rationale behind the Commission's Open Internet NPRM. As an organization that has experienced discrimination, we applaud initiatives advocating equal treatment, but not at the expense of broadband adoption and the risks imposed upon our community by net neutrality.

The main reason African Americans cite for not adopting broadband is cost. If network providers are forced to treat all data equally, they could be forced to also spread the costs equally among all consumers. According to a paper by Dr. Kevin Hassett and Dr. Robert Shapiro, which examined broadband pricing structures and broadband adoption, spreading the cost equally among consumers will "significantly slow the rate of adoption at the lower end of the income scale and extend the life of the digital divide." Additionally, a report by EDUCAUSE, a higher education technology group, estimated that an additional \$100 billion over the next three to five years would be needed in order to supply every house and business with broadband.

In light of these finding, we urge the Commission to take caution and refrain from enacting rules that could negatively impact the cost of broadband and deter network investment. Instead, we encourage the Commission to focus on increasing broadband adoption, particularly in our minority communities, so that all Americans, regardless of race, can achieve "accomplishments higher than they might have imagined."

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Art W. Kennedy". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Art W. Kennedy  
Treasurer  
Kappa Alpha Psi Foundation